

THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO



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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 16, 2004

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Metro Career Center Opens April 17th

Million Metro Career Center New Home to San Diego Workforce Partnership

SAN DIEGO -- The City Heights community will welcome the San Diego Workforce Partnership to the neighborhood tomorrow, Saturday, April 17th, with a grand opening celebration and ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Metro Career Center. The \$20 million facility is the first phase of the City Heights Metro Center redevelopment project that will eventually include other community amenities and an affordable housing element.

Mayor Dick Murphy and Deputy Mayor Toni Atkins, who will both be in attendance at the grand opening, view the employment and training center as a much-needed enhancement in the revitalization of City Heights and the development of San Diego's workforce.

"The Metro Career Center provides a state-of-the-art resource for the community to help get the valuable job training necessary to find meaningful and desirable employment in San Diego," said Mayor Dick Murphy. "Coupled with the nearly completed affordable housing element, this project demonstrates how redevelopment works to improve communities by providing quality housing and services."

The Metro Career Center facility offers job seekers and employers a comprehensive menu of services designed to improve worker skill sets and provide qualified employees to businesses large and small throughout Mid-City, Mission Valley, Downtown and other job centers in the region. In addition, the building is located along a major transit hub at I-15 and University Avenue and will feature retail space, a community meeting room, classrooms and daycare facilities.

"The Career Center will provide the residents of City Heights and the surrounding Mid-City communities a wealth of new job training and placement opportunities, helping to develop and train San Diego's workforce," said Deputy Mayor Toni Atkins, whose Third District includes City Heights. "We are excited that the San Diego Workforce Partnership will be the driving force behind our job training facility, and when you add in the other soon-to-be-completed quality affordable housing units, as well as community amenities, this project will be another testament to what can be done through public and private partnerships."

The San Diego Workforce Partnership, together with more than a dozen other partners, provides job training and employment assistance through a joint powers agreement between the City and the County of San Diego. The organization moved into the 81,500 square-foot office building from a smaller facility in Kearny Mesa. The new center is within blocks of several transit routes and next to Interstate 15 at the University Avenue exit.

"This is the result of a unique collaboration between the City of San Diego, the County of San Diego and Workforce Partnership," said Larry Fitch, President and CEO of the San Diego Workforce Partnership. "Not only is the Metro Career Center in a better position to serve the greater metro area, but it is also a pivotal component in the comprehensive redevelopment of City Heights. We are grateful to Deputy Mayor Atkins and the joint policy board - Councilmember Charles Lewis, County Supervisors Ron Roberts and Greg Cox - for making the center a reality."

The project will also offer a much-needed affordable housing component. The \$25.5 million, 120-unit Metro Villas will be comprised of nine three- and four-story apartment buildings, a laundry building and resident activities building. Designed for very low-income residents, the Metro Villas offers units of one to four bedrooms. A 489-space parking structure has been built to serve both the commercial and residential components of the project. Metro Villas is expected to open in August 2004.

San Diego Revitalization Corporation, a division of Price Charities, is the developer of the project. Price Charities, through their City Heights initiative, has partnered with the City of San Diego Redevelopment Agency to focus on the revitalization of the City Heights neighborhood.

The project was made possible through a unique collaborative effort of the City of San Diego, its Redevelopment Agency (Community and Economic Development Department and the Centre City Development Corporation) and Housing Commission, San Diego Workforce Partnership, City Heights Community Development Corporation, San Diego Interfaith Housing Foundation and San Diego Revitalization Corporation, the development arm of Price Charities. Redevelopment efforts in City Heights have focused on affordable housing, new commercial and retail space, and improved community facilities and public transit - the Metro Career Center and Metro Villas projects build upon these, truly focusing on community needs.

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